

Mansfield Public Library Policies

“The Mansfield Public Library provides free and equal access to a broad range of information, education and literature for all.”

– The Mission Statement

Preface

The Mansfield Public Library was established in 1929 as a branch of the Tarrant County Free Library System. With the closing of the system in 1962, the library became a department of the City of Mansfield. It has been in several locations around the city’s historic downtown since, and moved to its current location at 104 South Wisteria in the summer of 2001. The library celebrated its 75th anniversary in 2004.

In 2011, The Mansfield Public Library and the Arlington Public Library entered into an agreement to share resources in the Mansfield and Arlington communities. Residents of Mansfield have full access to the collections and services of both libraries.

Mansfield Public Library Advisory Board

The Mansfield Public Library Advisory Board is appointed by the Mansfield City Council to serve as the liaison between the Mansfield Public Library and the community, and to advise the Council on matters pertaining to public library service. Seven in number, Library Advisory Board members serve staggered two year terms and meet once a month, or as necessary, with the City Librarian. Meetings are open to the public, are held in accordance with city policy and follow specific guidelines. For more details on the Library Advisory Board and its meetings, see *Guidelines for Conduct of Library Advisory Board Meetings*, separately.

Friends of the Mansfield Public Library

The Friends of the Mansfield Public Library is an independent group of volunteer library supporters, organized as a 501(c) 3 non-profit organization. It provides additional funding for the library through its book store and other fundraisers, and assists the Library Advisory Board by advocating public library service before the community. While they do not take on the legal responsibilities of the Library Board, they have supported the library since 1965, have been integral to construction and furnishing of three public library facilities, and continue to support public library activities. Many Library Advisory Board members are currently, or have been, members of the Friends of the Library organization.

Intellectual Freedom and Confidentiality

The Mansfield Public Library considers patron library records to be confidential and not public record (*Chapter 552.124, Texas Government Code*). Patron records will be treated as confidential and not open to public scrutiny. Library staff will treat patron records as confidential, in accordance with the law and city policy.

The freedoms to read and to view are corollary to the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution’s guarantee of freedom of the press. Freedom of choice in selecting materials is a necessary safeguard to the freedom to read and should be protected. The Mansfield Public

Library supports the principles set forth in the *Library Bill of Rights*, the *Freedom to Read* statement, and the *Freedom to View* statement of the American Library Association.

The Mansfield Public Library will have materials presenting various points of view, within the limitations of space, budget, and availability, to enable individuals to make their own choices and decisions. *The Mansfield Public Library and the City of Mansfield do not endorse the opinions expressed in the materials held in the library's collection.* Selection of library materials will not be made on the basis of any anticipated approval or disapproval, but solely on the merits of the work in relation to collection development and to serving the needs and interests of patrons. The library collection will include a wide selection and subjects will be covered in sufficient depth to meet anticipated and expressed needs. The library collection as a whole will not be representative of any particular beliefs or points of view.

Patrons not finding desired materials in the collections of the Mansfield and Arlington Public Libraries may request that they be borrowed through interlibrary loan (ILL) or be considered for purchase. The request for purchase will be considered under all applicable selection criteria.

Hours and Days of Operation

The Mansfield Public Library Advisory Board will recommend to the Mansfield City Council public service hours based upon the following criteria:

- The library will be open as many public service hours and as many days in the week as budgetary and staffing levels permit.
- Operating hours will be determined by the convenience of the hours to all parts of the community population.
- The library will be closed on some recognized city holidays. Library closed days may differ from official city holidays as agreed upon with the Director of Parks and Community Services. Since 2001, the library has been closed on the following days: New Year's Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, Thanksgiving Friday, Thanksgiving Saturday, Christmas Eve and Christmas Day.

Patron Conduct and Attire

Library patrons should conduct themselves with consideration for others inside the library and on library property. The library staff is authorized to maintain order and enforce library policy.

Patrons who damage library materials, equipment or facilities, fail to return library materials, refuse to pay late fees and other charges, or consistently interfere with other patrons' use of the library may have their library privileges revoked, including the use of library computers.

Attire for individuals using the library shall include appropriate shoes or sandals, shirts, and pants, shorts, or skirts. Roller blades, skates, skateboards, cleats and other footwear that may

damage floors and furniture or cause injury are prohibited. Individuals inappropriately attired will be asked to become appropriately attired, or to leave.

Behaviors prohibited in the library include, but are not limited to:

- Eating and drinking in inappropriate areas
- Smoking
- Inappropriate and/or excessive demands upon the services of the library staff or use of library materials and facilities
- Displays of a lewd or lascivious nature (including on computer screens)
- Actions which are a threat to the safety or well-being of library users
- Actions disruptive to the orderly transaction of library business
- Loud and disruptive noise
- Failure to comply with requests made by library staff members concerning use of library resources, services and facilities
- Failure to comply with library and city procedures, policies, and regulations
- Failure of responsible parties to provide care, supervise, and maintain control of children
- Uncivil behavior toward the library staff or other library patrons

Library patrons exhibiting inappropriate behavior will be asked to refrain from this behavior. If they fail to comply, library staff will ask them to leave the library. If these patrons refuse to obey this request, library staff will call the police for assistance.

Unattended Children

The Mansfield Public Library welcomes citizens of all ages to use and enjoy the facilities, resources, and programs offered by the library. The library staff cannot monitor the behavior and whereabouts of each patron, including children. Children could be approached by a stranger, become frightened, or leave the building. Because the safety of children is paramount, the library has established the following:

- While in the library, children under age 12 must be attended by a parent or other responsible adult who is at least 17 years old. If a child is left unattended, every effort will be made to contact the responsible adult.
- Adults will be asked to monitor the behavior of their child. If the child becomes disruptive, they will be asked to handle the situation so that the child does not disturb other patrons. If they do not, they will be asked to leave.
- Patrons aged 12 and above who become disruptive will be asked to improve their behavior. If disruptive behavior continues, they will be asked to leave the library.
- Young patrons under age 12 left unattended in the library at closing time will be asked to call their responsible adult. Staff will let these patrons know that they may safely wait for a ride in the library.
- Two staff members will wait with the child until someone arrives to pick the child up.

If any of the above are not resolved to the satisfaction of the staff member in charge, police may be called for assistance.

Donations and Gifts

The Mansfield Public Library welcomes gifts and donations of money and tangible items and property. Materials not considered by the City Librarian to be necessary to the library collection will not be added to the collection and will be turned over to the Friends of the Mansfield Public Library for disposition. Donations made in honor or memory of a person, family, group or organization should be discussed with the City Librarian or a designate before the donation is made. Donated items are not plated to identify either the memorial or the donors.

The library will not assign a monetary value to any gift or donation and will not accept materials that are not given unconditionally.

Monetary donations will be directed to either the library donation fund, or to the Friends of the Mansfield Public Library, according to the wishes of those donating the funds.

Donations and gifts of books, periodicals, videos, audiocassettes, DVDs, audio books, computer software, CD's, equipment, etc., become the property of the Mansfield Public Library and are subject to all administrative selection, acquisition, retention, weeding, and disposition policies, procedures, and other criteria that apply to all other library materials and resources.

If requested, library staff will give the donor a receipt to acknowledge the donation.

Displays

The City Librarian or designated staff may solicit exhibits for limited display that are appropriate to the mission and purpose of the library. The City Librarian may accept or reject any exhibit offered for display in the library.

Neither the Mansfield Public Library nor the City of Mansfield is liable for the loss or damage of display items. Persons displaying items in the library must sign an exhibit waiver form provided by the City Librarian before any item may be displayed.

Postings or Handouts

The Mansfield Public Library will display postings of community events and other items of interest to the community on its bulletin boards. All posted items will be given to the City Librarian for preview beforehand, and if it is determined that the items are of benefit to the community, they will be posted.

Volunteers

The Mansfield Public Library welcomes and encourages those age 12 and over to volunteer their time and talents to enrich and support library services. Volunteers may be used for

special events, projects, and activities, or on a regular basis to assist staff. Volunteers age 15 and over will be subject to a background check. All volunteers will be trained and supervised by the library staff. Volunteers will supplement, but not replace, staff. Volunteers may apply for paid positions under the same conditions as other applicants.

Interlibrary Loan

Materials not held by the Mansfield or Arlington Public Libraries may be borrowed through the interlibrary loan service (ILL). When the materials become available, patrons will be notified to let them know that their materials are ready for pick up. A postage fee may be charged if materials are not picked up.

Reference

The Mansfield Public Library Advisory Board recognizes the importance of providing professional reference services through a variety of media, including in person, or by telephone, fax, text message or e-mail. Print or electronic resources may be searched. For more information on use of computers and the Internet in the library, please see the section *Computer, Internet and Online Database Use Guidelines*, starting on page 11.

Although every effort will be made to respond to all reference inquiries, the library staff is unable to offer advice or opinions concerning medical, legal, tax or consumer topics.

Reserving Materials

Patrons with Mansfield or Arlington Public Library cards are allowed to reserve materials at no charge. When the materials become available, patrons will be notified that the materials are ready for pick up. If the materials are not picked up they will become available for the next patron or returned to the shelves.

Photocopies

Photocopies are available at the library for a fee. Patrons will need to make copies themselves, though staff members are available to assist. U.S. Copyright Law governing photocopies will be followed at all times.

Public Meeting Rooms

The Community Room and meeting rooms of the Mansfield Public Library are primarily intended to support library operations and programming. However, the library may also make these rooms available to individuals and groups for study, meetings and programs, provided they do not conflict with library and city uses and follow the established guidelines. Details may be found in the separate document *Mansfield Public Library Meeting Rooms*.

Library Programs

Library programs are intended to entertain, enlighten, educate, and inform. They are vehicles for dispensing valuable information, encouraging learning and exploration, providing amusement while teaching, and provoking wonder and thought.

In order to achieve the library's mission in the community, the Mansfield Public Library supports and endorses programming in the library and also as outreach to the community.

Statewide Systems

The Mansfield Public Library Advisory Board encourages the City Librarian to join and/or use any statewide programs that would be beneficial to library patrons, including, but not limited to, those provided by the Texas State Library and Archives, Interlibrary Loan, and North Texas Library Partners.

Lending and Use of Materials

The Mansfield Public Library welcomes library patrons of all ages, socio-economic backgrounds, and educational levels. Library facilities, services, programs, and materials are available to anyone who comes in person to the library and uses its resources.

Library materials are loaned to patrons holding a valid Mansfield–Arlington Public Library card. The following are eligible to receive a library card free of charge:

- Patrons who are at least 17 years of age, upon presenting a valid Texas driver's license, Texas ID card, or other acceptable picture ID card, issued by a governmental entity in the United States.
- Patrons who are at least 17 years of age, who do not have a valid Texas drivers' license, Texas ID card or other acceptable picture ID, but who have a sponsor of at least 17 years of age who satisfies the ID requirements.
- Minor children under 17 years of age who have the permission of and a responsible adult at least 17 years of age who is willing to assume responsibility for the use of the minor's card.

Patrons must sign their library card, accepting its terms and conditions.

Library materials are loaned to patrons who-present a valid Mansfield– Arlington library user card, and do not owe any fees or charges to either library.

Library patrons are responsible for selecting materials to borrow and use for themselves and their children, taking into consideration the appropriateness of the subject matter, the themes, the reading levels, the maturity level, and the presentation.

Mansfield Public Library materials loaned to patrons are solely for their use. The borrowing of materials is subject to, but not restricted to, the following regulations:

- Library materials borrowed on a patron library card are the sole responsibility of the cardholder. Fees and charges may apply for late, lost or damaged materials, including interlibrary loan, as well as printing, copying and use of other library services.

- Materials may be checked out for specific circulation periods. These materials may be returned during normal operating hours or returned to the book drop. Patrons are responsible for returning materials on time and in good condition.
- Library materials are considered late on the day following the circulation period assigned at the time of check-out and are subject to all appropriate fees and charges levied by the Mansfield and Arlington Public Libraries .
- Damaged materials should be reported to the library staff. Items will be examined as they are returned. Responsible parties will be assessed appropriate fees and charges for damaged materials.
- Lost materials should be reported to the library staff. Responsible parties will be assessed appropriate fees and charges for lost materials.
- 25 library material items may be borrowed per library card. Patrons may be limited to a specific number of items in one genre or material type and should always try to limit themselves to a manageable number of checked out items. This is subject to change at any time by the City Librarian, with review from the Library Advisory Board.
- Any item available for loan may be placed on hold (i.e., to hold the item when it is returned to the library) by placing a request for it at one of the library's Express Check computer terminals or at the library's website online. Staff may be consulted for assistance with this feature. Holds may not be placed over the telephone.

Circulation Periods

Circulation periods vary for different items and are set by the City Librarian after consultation with the Library Advisory Board. Circulation periods are outlined on the Library website and in the Library's information brochure.

Fees and Charges

Fees and charges for the use of library materials are set by the City Council upon recommendation by the Library Advisory Board. They will be reviewed annually and may be adjusted as necessary by Council action after review by the Library Advisory Board. These are outlined on the Library website and in the Library's information brochure.

Fees and charges may be levied for overdue, damaged, or lost materials. Materials will be examined as they are returned and fees and charges may be assessed. Lost materials should be reported to a library staff member. Under certain circumstances, fees and charges may be waived by the City Librarian.

Collection Development and Maintenance

Collection development and maintenance is the responsibility of the City Librarian, who has oversight of, and supervisory responsibility for, staff involved in selection and acquisition of library materials and resources. The library will maintain a collection of books, audiovisual media, electronic databases, online access, and other resources that reflect the mission, vision and values of the library to the community.

Community input into the selection of library resources will be encouraged. Library patrons will have a mechanism for suggesting acquisitions to enhance collections. Within the scope of budget limitations and strong selection criteria, the library will try to fulfill patron requests whenever possible.

Library staff will select all materials, nonprint items, and online public access electronic resources, in order to fulfill the following criteria:

- That the materials and electronic resources will serve a purpose in the collection to inform, educate, entertain or enlighten.
- That all materials and electronic resources have been researched through review sources, evaluation, referrals from other library professionals, patron recommendations, recommendations from professionals in library-related organizations, media publicity, etc. Review sources include, but are not limited to: *ALA Booklist*, *Library Journal*, *Hornbook*, *the New York Times Book Review*, *Publisher's Weekly*, *Kirkus Reviews*, *Book Page*, local media, and other professional and popular media.
- That there is a need for the materials and electronic resources which is known, expressed, or anticipated.
- That the quality and format of the materials and electronic resources are conducive to and appropriate for public library use.
- That print, nonprint, and electronic resources support the mission of the Mansfield Public Library.

Examples of items covered under this policy are books (fiction and nonfiction), periodicals, newspapers, DVDs, talking books, audio books, e-books, music and spoken word CDs, online services, electronic databases, etc.

Damaged Library Materials

Library materials are often subject to aging or damage, falling into such disrepair that they can no longer be used, even when the information they contain is still valid. Items identified as damaged or aged to the point of requiring repairs will be repaired if the items are considered by

library staff to be necessary to the collection. If evaluated as not necessary to the collection, or damaged or aged beyond reasonable repair, then the items will be withdrawn from the collection and either forwarded to the Friends of the Mansfield Public Library for disposition or, if too badly damaged to be sold, discarded by the City Librarian. These materials may or may not be replaced by the library.

Withdrawal (Weeding) of Library Materials

Maintaining the integrity of the materials collections of the Mansfield Public Library through systematic evaluation, deselection, and withdrawal of materials and electronic resources is critical for collection development and maintenance. Factors influencing the decision to either retain or withdraw items from the collection will be made by the City Librarian or designated library staff and may be influenced by the following:

- Frequency of circulation
- Overall physical condition
- Overall appearance
- Age of the information contained
- Availability of space
- Need relative to the library's mission.

Materials withdrawn from the library's collection will be forwarded to the Friends of the Mansfield Public Library for the Friends Book Sale, or, if too badly damaged to be sold, discarded by the City Librarian. In the case of a patron paying for materials too badly damaged to continue in the collection, they may be turned over to the patron once they have been withdrawn.

Challenged Materials

Patrons finding certain library materials and resources objectionable or patrons objecting to the exclusion of materials or resources from the collection may discuss them with the City Librarian. If patrons request additional consideration they must complete the form *Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials*. Upon receipt of this request, the City Librarian will contact the patron and discuss the materials with the patron. If the matter is not resolved, the request will be referred to the Library Advisory Board for review. The patron will be notified of the time and place of the meeting where the request will be discussed and may attend the meeting if he or she so desires. If the patron chooses not to attend the Board meeting where the materials are discussed, his or her name will be kept confidential by the City Librarian.

A written evaluation of the request for reconsideration will be made by the City Librarian, and the patron will be notified of the results. All materials selected under the materials selection policy of the library are considered constitutionally protected until such time as any materials taken individually are determined unprotected by judicial action and after all appeals have been exhausted.

In the event that the patron charges that any materials are not protected under the First Amendment to the Constitution, the burden of proof will rest with that patron. Materials being challenged will remain in the active collection until an appropriate judgment is made.

Computer, Internet and Online Resources Use Guidelines

The Mansfield Public Library endeavors to develop collections, resources, and services to meet the informational, educational and recreational needs of the members of Mansfield's diverse community. It is within this context that public access to the library's computers and to the resources available through the computers, including the Internet, is made available at no charge to the user.

This section contains a policy for the management of the library's computers owned and administered by the Mansfield Public Library and the resources they make available. The library provides filtered access to the Internet.

1. Who May Use

- All public computer and Internet resources available at the library are provided to all library users of 12 years of age and older with a valid Mansfield or Arlington Public Library card. Users under the age of 12 may use a children's computer by themselves or a public computer if their responsible adult age 17 or over stays with them.
- The Mansfield Public Library staff does not have the right or responsibility to act in place of parents, guardians or other adults responsible for children under 12. Parents or other responsible adults, not library staff, are responsible for the computer and Internet information selected and/or accessed by children in their charge.
- Use of filtering software does not guarantee that a site considered objectionable by the user will be blocked. Parents are advised to supervise their children's Internet sessions. Only the parents or responsible adults may restrict the children in their charge from access to the computer network and Internet resources accessible through the library.
- Users 17 years of age and above may ask a staff member to unblock a site. Appropriate sites will be unblocked. Users under the age of 17 must have a responsible adult age 17 or over ask to have the site unblocked. Sites deemed inappropriate by the City Librarian will not be unblocked, no matter what the age of the user.

- Users are cautioned that the Internet is not a secure environment. Personal information included in all transactions, files and communications may be subject to unauthorized access by third parties both for wireless access and library provided computers. ***Privacy is not guaranteed on any public computer or through the library's wireless access.***
 - The Mansfield Public Library respects the privacy of those using its electronic resources and will only release library records as required by law or as reasonably required for library operations (*Texas Government Code 552.124*).
 - Use of the Mansfield Public Library's facilities and resources assumes that the patron agrees to comply with all the library's rules and regulations, including those concerning computer and Internet use. The policies and procedures discussed in these guidelines are subject to change.
2. Library computing resources may only be used for purposes that are legal and shall be guided by the following:
- Users must respect the privacy of other users and be sensitive to the fact that workstations are in public areas and, therefore, images on the screen are subject to view by a wide audience. Library staff cannot guarantee privacy on any workstations.
 - Users must abide by the legal protection provided by copyright and license to programs, text, and images.
 - Users must have consideration for the integrity of the library's computing services. This means that users will not change defaults, damage or hack into any computer, or attempt to bypass any security on the computers.
3. Examples of unacceptable or illegal use include, but are not limited to the following:
It is illegal to use the library's computers or computing services, including the Internet, for any purposes which violate U.S., state, or local laws. It is unacceptable to transmit or display threatening, obscene, indecent, or harassing materials, or to interfere with or disrupt network users, services or equipment. Disruptions include, but are not limited to: distribution of unsolicited advertising, distribution of computer worms and viruses, and using the network to make unauthorized entry to any other machine accessible via the network (hacking).

According to the Texas Penal Code 43:24: A person commits an offense if, knowing that material might be harmful, he or she displays such material in a manner that is reckless about whether a minor is present who could be offended or alarmed by the display. Viewing such material could lead to being barred from the library and/or prosecuted under the law.

- Users may not represent themselves as another person.
 - It is assumed that information and resources accessible via the Internet are private to the individuals and organizations which own or hold rights to those resources and information, unless specifically stated otherwise by the owners or holders of those rights. It is therefore not acceptable for an individual to use or download the information unless permission to do so has been granted by the owners or holders of rights to those resources or information.
 - Users should comply with U.S. Copyright laws.
 - Malicious or destructive use of equipment is not acceptable and may be illegal. Use of computing facilities in a manner that precludes or hampers its use by others is not allowed.
 - Violation of software license agreements is not allowed.
 - Damaging any computer equipment or software is not allowed.
 - Engaging in any activity that is harassing or defamatory or interrupts other library users' use of library resources, including computer usage, is not allowed.
 - Violation of the Mansfield Public Library's computer system security is not allowed.
 - No downloads may be made directly to the Mansfield Public Library's computer systems, but only to portable USB data storage devices.
 - Patrons may not use library headphones unless under age 12 and using a children's computer.
 - Patrons under the age of 17 are not allowed to share a computer. Patrons over the age of 17 and sharing a computer will be asked to separate if they are disturbing other patrons.
 - Patrons age 17 and above may request a guest pass. Patrons under the age of 17 may not receive a guest pass.
4. A person violating these guidelines for access and use shall be given a verbal warning that the person is in violation by his/her actions or conduct. Continued violations may result in suspension of library computer user privileges.

Violations of federal, state or local laws may result in prosecution and/or barring from the library.

5. Computer Use Guidelines

- The library's computers and electronic services will be available during the library's normal operating hours, except for periodic maintenance.
- Computers will shut down ten minutes before the library closes. All documents and files should be saved to a portable USB data storage device.
- Users may go directly to a public computer if one is available and use their library cards to access computers.
- If no computers are available, users may ask for staff assistance in reserving a computer.
- Users may save files on portable USB storage devices only. At no time may files be saved on a library computer.
- Use of the library's computers and electronic services is on a first-come, first-served basis. Those using the computers and electronic services will have a time limit of 1 hour (60 minutes). If no one is waiting to use the equipment, the user will be able to continue to use it until it is needed. If the computer is needed by another patron, a message appears notifying the patron that their time is limited.
- Users may not install and use additional software programs, including their own, on library computers.
- Users must pre-pay to print.
- Although the staff is available to help the user conduct his/her search or activity, it is unable to conduct searches or perform online activities, such as filling out forms, assisting with web mail, using search engines, etc., for users.
- The library is not responsible for damage to personal drives, disks, equipment, etc. used on the public computers.
- Due to the limited number of computers, the available bandwidth, and computer security some sites may not be available.

Disclaimer

Since the Internet is a global electronic network, there is no federal, state, or local control of its users or content. The Internet is unregulated and its available resources may contain material of a controversial or offensive nature to users. The library staff only assumes responsibility for the information provided on the home page and the supporting web pages present on the library's server. The Internet and its available resources may contain materials of a controversial or offensive nature to the user. The Mansfield Public Library staff does not monitor and has no control over the information or the links accessed through the Internet which often change rapidly and unpredictably. Additionally, not all sources on the Internet provide accurate, complete, reliable, or current information. The user needs to be a good information consumer, questioning the validity of the information found. The City of Mansfield and the Mansfield Public Library assume no liability on connections to other services or sites, or of the information obtained.

Approved by the Mansfield Public Library Advisory Board February 13, 2013.